(118)

(1918)

Charleston

Dec 13

My Billy.

Its angelic of you to have the children & I am really most thankful to you & relieved in my mind about them - I see that it is after all a great thing so to bring up an Ape that will come to your rescue in times of need - You know I would do the same by you should you want it. I will give you directions about them now in case by any chance I should not see you before I am laid low. But - its not very likely. Much more probably I shall be kept waiting weeks as usual.

About milk. They do not really have a great deal & cocoa made mostly with

P.S. I've gotta well chain & over-coat repaired so please don't send me yours. Yours came in just when I wanted it & was delicious. Let the baby wailers no history & leave me his room & dresser in the vicarage for evermore.

(118)

(1918)

Charleston

Dec 13

My Billy.

Its angelic of you to have the children & I am really most thankful to you & relieved in my mind about them - I see that it is after all a great thing so to bring up an Age that will come to your rescue in times of need - You know I would do the same by you should you want it. I will give you directions about them now in case by any chance I should not see you before I am laid low. But its not very likely. Much more probably I shall be kept waiting weeks as usual.

About milk. They don't really have a great deal. A cocoa made mostly with

P.S. I'm quite well again & over-ear repulsively so please don't send nuelfood. Your soup came in just when I wished it & was delicious. Do not bother any more.

water they can nearly always have as a substitute. Their meals are :— they get up about 8.30. or any time you find convenient — Blow them up if they make a noise before coming down. If Lothe will take them some hot water they will get themselves washed & dressed. Breakfast usually consists of porridge (with a little sugar or treacle) & milk — that's the only time when milk seems rather necessary — a piece of bacon each & bread & margarine. (Don't give them butter — Keep their butter ration for yourselves. They if anything prefer margarine & it's quite as good for them.) No jam or honey or anything else for breakfast. Lunch at any time you like — simply

what one has oneself but
its usually very plain here.
meat or sometimes fish & a
milk pudding & perhaps a
plain steamed pudding or any
kind of pudding in fact.
Milk puddings are probably
impossible for you & are unnecessary.
Tea, bread & honey or jam
& margarine (I'll send some
honey with them) they drink
very little milk at teas
generally & cocoa will do
instead. That's all. No
supper. Bed at 7. They
generally do their washing
then. If Lottie or Nelly could
keep an eye on them then
they can wash themselves
etc! but it may be an
awkward time for them to
do so. If so they could go to
bed at 6.30 instead. I
daresay with the excitement
of being with you that would be

as well. Then they'll be safely in bed by 7 & need just be considered again till the next morning. Could you give Julian a 5 grain tablet of bromide in water when he goes to bed (I send some with him) He has them from time to time & is having them now: & could someone be within ear-shot in case he should call out at night - sometimes but very seldom now he can't get to sleep & then he gets nervous. But I hope he won't - As long as he knows someone would hear he'll be all right. If this is difficult at Hogarth perhaps Lottie wouldn't mind just looking in on him after supper & if he's awake then going up once more in the course of the evening. Then he'd be quite all right - They'll be

quite contented alone all the morning if they may have pencil & paper & a book or two. You needn't bother about them at all - Any small objects they can pretend are armies, such as peas or beans - or cards - will keep them happy for hours too. Everything will be new to them & it's good for them to be left to themselves a good deal. Please don't bother about them in the least when you want to write. They're really very independent & have lots of games of their own. I know that both Jinnie & Rachel would be only too glad if they're at Hogarth to come & take them for walks - also to take them out to tea. Jinnie's old ladies have already invited them there. But I haven't said they may be with you

at Hogarth definitely yet as
I don't know if you'd find
it a bore to have Jinnie
coming to the house. But
if you like I'd write both to
her & to Mabel & suggest that
they might sometimes go &
take them out - then they'd
be off your hands occasionally
for several hours at a time.
I think Mabel would very much
like to see them anyhow & I
suppose she can get away from
Ann & the baby occasionally
& would like them to be a bit
something - Please let me know
if you'd like me also to write
to Jinnie who can get as
much time off as she likes
& would certainly take them
about a great deal if you'd
like her to.

As for not paying - it

seems to me absurd not to
let me, for really I've got
lots of money & I shant
have them to pay for here.
I wish you would let me —
They will make a great
difference to your weekly
books as you will find they've
got immense appetites &
you're sure to give them de-
licious new things which
will also stimulate their
greed. So I really should
feel happier if you'd let me
contribute £2 a week to
their keep.

Please be severe with them
if they make too much noise
They're in quite good control
at present, thanks to Mrs B.
but if they get too much
excited you may find them
a bore. I hope Leonard won't
mind having them. but I

think he likes brats & they'll be thrilled by anything he can tell them about his Congolese adventures. I shall be very curious to know what you & the think of them when you see them at close quarters.

Do you think you could possibly look out the address of Mrs Lucas (?) the agent. in the telephone directory & send it me on a card? I thought I might write & her about a nurse for the baby. I haven't got one yet but have only just begun to try seriously. She seemed so lady like - she might have for genteel servants. But this I suppose she'd be respectable which may be a good thing in a nurse. The doctor & Samp are all arranged for

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1918

& so are most other things
& I suppose I shall come by
a nurse somehow now that
the war's over. Of course if
your Ford should break I
should be very glad. I
want to get a young one.
someone who's been nurse-
maid under a good nurse
or well trained somewhere.
who'd learn with me:
I don't want an expensive
middle-aged experienced
female like someone who'd
do as I told her. as up
as she could be trusted &
be clean & had a nice
character. She'd have
to be. I expect all this
next spring & summer - after
that God knows - but I
expect in London or abroad.
& good for the year
& I'm glad [illegible] which I'm
glad [illegible] diverts you - but
you never see it - like to

some extent change soon I expect. Bunny will go to London & take to some work or other. Duncan I daresay will be partly here & partly in London. & so perhaps shall I – but both he & I are vague still. I think however I shall anyhow keep the children here till next autumn

You need never be afraid that I suffer from want of mockery. That is not my need in life. No. Far from it. I have no room to ask you about Shelley House. What is Shelley House? I say its Elena's residence but Duncan says that's impossible. Anyhow it absolutely fascinates us & we wish it were a concert every week. Also you really ought to visit Bibbanga before Easter. Fall our relatives & time you undertook to see Violet again. Yours VB.

T. PARSONS 3-2-73

(119)

Chamberlain

(?15 Dec 1918)

Sunday

My Billy.

I wonder if you'd let me send the children to you ~~to-morrow~~ even if the baby hasn't arrived, on Dec. 24th that is, if it wouldn't be too difficult for you to have them then - The Samp comes on the 27th & I think the baby must come soon afterwards, for I'm allowing for its being as late as the others were even so. If I might do so it would be a great help, as I think it would be best to have the house empty at the time. & also I don't want them to be upset or neglected in the inevitable

turmoil of the moment. They'd be in the way & might get rather shooed about & upset themselves & other people. They could perhaps return here on the 3rd when you go to Richmond & Clive comes here & then come to you at Richmond a few days later for another week or so? It will be quite easy to have them back here when the baby is a fortnight old or even less as Clive will be here, & it won't mean that I have to return to normal life sooner than I should anyhow -

Craig is giving advice to the doctor here so you needn't fear that I shan't be coddled.

But please tell me if this plan wouldn't suit you

If quite leaving the stoves it may be difficult to have the children then.

Emily has just given me warning! On the whole I think its a good thing. She & Jenny went to Lewes for the afternoon, saying they'd return by 5. & didn't return till after 10. Leaving everything undone. So next morning I gave Emily a good blowing up, knowing that if I didn't she'd do it again whenever she felt inclined to & it might be really inconvenient.

Afterwards she came to me & told me she thought she'd better leave as she felt she didn't suit me, which in fact she doesn't. So I said all right. Luckily Jenny for the present at any rate seems to be contented & has

said nothing about leaving too &
E. said she'd stay as long
as I wanted her – she didn't
mind how long. So I shan't
bother about it till I'm all
right again by which time I
daresay servants will be more
plentiful – I expect really
that E. will be asking to stay
before long but I shall be quite
glad to get rid of her as soon
as I see a decent chance of
getting some one else. She's incredibly
stupid, very noisy & very rough.
Jenny on the other hand is quite
intelligent & will become a really
good cook with a little training
She's already much better than
Trissie – Would better perhaps
be discreet as usual about these
domesticities – unless you should
hear of two sisters – one as nurse
& one as housemaid which might
be possible. I hope I shall see
you soon after the 20th Yours V.B

(120)

Charleston

?19 Dec 1918

Thursday

My Billy.

If Nellie & Lottie are going home for Christmas would it be very difficult for you to leave the children on the 28th? Please let me know about this as I could really keep them here till you arrive at Richmond. Whatever you do don't let me live you out with them. They are independent brats but the children are living especially if you aren't used to them & I shall be in Leonardi bad graces for ever (with good reason) if I miss your health with mine

They are simply wild with
joy at the idea of going to
you - Their special ambition
it seems is to go to the
British Museum! I said I
thought you might take
them there. I have had
to tell Irene they'll be with
you but I haven't said
anything to her about letting
them out, so if she asks
her to suggest doing so or
of course you can ask her
to come if you want to
but there's absolutely no need
for you to. I think Mabel
would really be made very
happy by being allowed to
see them sometimes & they're
so nice you won't mind.

Also as you know, the
worships you! I wonder
if you'd let her (unless you
feel inclined to do so yourself)
take Quentin to get a pair of
new boots. Strong ones for
country wear - They usually
cost about 12/- to 15/- but I
may be more. Could you
pay for them & let me
know?

Is it you who are
responsible for sending me
Mrs Humphry Ward's book?
It's apparently a review copy
sent to J. M. Murry & seems
to come from him but I
suppose it's your doing.
Should I return it to
him? How priceless -
what is the peculiar medium
of common place banality.

snobbishness, animism & boastfulness which makes her hit the bull's eye of British middle class taste with such amazing skill each time? It's really fascinating, taken in small doses. I hope you're going to expose her somewhere.

Come & see my queer household when you can. We must of its queerness will have gone, in the shape of Mrs B. Maynard is coming for Christmas. Only the atmosphere (I hope) is still here to attract you.

Yours
VB

(121) (1918)

Charleston
Dec - 24

My Billy.

In case I don't see you before the children come to you I'm writing this note to send with them with final directions. In sending some night lights - could they have one in their room at night? It can be put out when you go to bed. Julian is so nervous in the dark. Also would you mind seeing - or could Lottie - when you go to bed. that he hasn't got the clothes tightly wrapped round his head. He usually has & doesn't get a breath of fresh air in consequence unless one pulls them off.

It all seems very confusing - Christmas, a crisis - Christmas, furnishing & (rather enjoy forwarding) disasters, hitches & vexations - what would life be without them.

Well! Much love. Return H-H. Yours

I sent you a nearly present a horrid little necklace - all I could do in circumstances

(121) (1918)

Charleston

Dec - 24

My Billy.

In case I don't see you before the children come to you I'm writing this note to send with them with final directions. In sending them night lights - could they have one in their room at night? It can be put out when you go to bed. Julian is so nervous in the dark. Also would you mind seeing - or could Lottie - when you go to bed. that he hasn't got the clothes tightly wrapped round his head. He usually has & doesn't get a breath of fresh air in consequence unless one pulls them off.

I sent you a nearly present made a necklace - all I could do in the circumstances.

It all seems very funnier & rather empty & crisis - Christmas, (Yesterday) (Yesterday) disasters Paris & us taxis what would life be without them.

well write return H-W. 4 Mrs 3

I hope they'll have enough clothes for the moment I'm sending clean ones & more stockings later. These very disreputable I'm afraid. I believe Julian wants new boots too. So could you be so angelic as to get him a pair. Also Mrs B. went & got Quentin shoes several size too large for him. Perhaps you could get him some that fit & these can keep till he fits them.

We have been having the kind of crises one always does have on these occasions. On Friday morning it seemed as if the baby were going to appear as I started having

a discharge of blood –
Nothing was really ready
& Mrs B was still in the
house, her taxi not having
turned up. I left her &
lower by a later train
in ignorance of anything.
& we got the rooms etc
ready & sent for the
doctor, as though I had no
pain I didn't dare to
run much risk & "show"
as they call it has
always been the first sign
of the baby with me before
& practically always is.
He came & brought a nurse
from Lewes whom he
left here as he said the
baby might begin at any
moment & probably would
in a few days & I expected

the left. However nothing more happened but as the Lewis nurse could only stay till Sunday & as the baby may still begin at any moment I had to send for my real Granny who came on Sunday so now it doesn't much matter what happens. I'd be glad to get it over but I'd also be glad to wait till after Christmas.

Another crisis has now arisen - Jenny having developed a "bad face" probably an abscess or gumboil (to do with a tooth) & how she can't do much. So Maynard, who was anyhow going up to London for the day today, is going & bring Blanche back with him to take us over the next

(122)

Charleston
Firle
Sussex

29 Dec 1918

Sunday

My Billy

It was just as well you did not come here yesterday as I could not have seen you owing to the usual milk difficulties. I am much better to-day, & I hope you will be able to come one day before you go. I am longing to see you. I am quite as fond of you as a mother as you are as an aunt. If I ~~thought~~ told you all I think of my daughter you would laugh

at me, but it is beyond
dispute that she has lovely
blue eyes, a Greek nose,
beautiful mouth & chin,
dark hair, clear skin,
a well shaped head & is
quite adorable. I will
keep the rest to myself.

Could you possibly keep the
children & take them to
Richmond with you?!
thought Clive would want
to see them here but I find
that it's really almost

impossible to have them
with only Emily to
look after them. Please
let me if you can manage
this.

If there is a chance of
getting other Servants
either cook & housemaid
or cook & housemaid - please
dont let me miss it -
Emily is utterly intolerable
idle, careless, dirty and
unpunctual. I must get
rid of her as soon as I can.

either get a cook instead of Jenny also, and a nurse or keep Jenny & get a nurse.
In any case please remember that after next autumn my servants would only be in the country for the Spring & Summer months that I would give good wages & a great deal of freedom & would jump at getting friends of Lottie & Nellies.
I hope this is not too confused. You can imagine me as happy as you like.
yrs V.B.

T. PARSONS 32.73